



THE MINT CONDITION PROJECT

Proposal for the City of St. Johns, Michigan – Mint City USA
March 3, 2019

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COLLABORATIVE ANALYSIS: Context

A powerful [Wall Street Journal](#) article from earlier this year said that rural America, much of which is seeing a [drop in population](#), is the new “inner city,” due to declining economic health and accelerating issues of disinvestment, drug dependency, and job loss. For an increasing number of small towns and rural communities, part of this answer lies in sustainability and going green. At a time when state and federal governments slowly grind through gridlock and partisanship, responsive local leadership can still be decisive.

Curbed | Patrick Sisson | Oct 31, 2017 | “How Six Small Towns and Cities Are Going Green”



COLLABORATIVE ANALYSIS: The Narrative

Struggling small town

St. Johns Struggling with main street decay.

Lost dividends

Attrition of economic development.

Current Sustainability Model

Focus mainly on recycling efforts.

Gap in understanding

How to attract affluence and economic development to area?
mentality is desperation and frustration
focus on selling and promoting for financial gain

Case study: GLANBIA NUTRITIONALS

State of Lack

Institutional education and capacity to promote new thinking.



COLLABORATIVE ANALYSIS: Solution Summary



Think Differently:

Educate Local residents in circular economy strategy, and its benefits to local economy at the grassroots level.

Develop a New Persona:

Pave the way for clean sustainable standards to revive manufacturing and businesses increasing economic development.

Implement Circular Economy:

Attract new residential affluence and next level regeneration development for continued vibrancy.



TEAM & Stakeholders



Dave Kudwa
City Manager
St. Johns



Jean Reustman
St. Johns City Commissioner
Board President, Briggs Library



Dru Mitchell
Executive Director
CCEA



John Sirrine, CPA
Sirrine & Associates
PSD-DDA President



EXISTING CONDITIONS: Case Study

Clairmont's Coffee House, St. Johns - Amber Lynn Haubert, Owner Launched November 2018

Locally sourced goods.
Composting grounds, waste where available.
No straws, compostable stirrs.
Eco friendly biodegradable containers and lids for travel only.
Percentage of profit funds education in developing countries.

Lack advertising in sustainable efforts, customer base knowledge.
Lack incentives in sustainable efforts from city government.
Lack tax initiatives for sustainable practice.
Lack physical support in eco-waste management.

**Infrastructure lacking knowledge and education
to support local business practicing sustainable economy.**



Profit



Planet



People



CONTEXT: Benchmarking a Green City

Columbus, Wisconsin | Population 5,300 | 30 miles from state capital

Leveraged Grants

\$40,000 from an energy wholesaler.

Created a Staff Position

Responsible for furthering the twin goals of economic development and sustainability.

Created a Marketing Persona

Messaging for the city as a sustainable community.

In twelve months, the city saw \$30 million dollars in capital investment.

People



Profit



Planet



SOLUTION OVERVIEW: The Design Problem

Creating buy-in and recognition of sustainable practices to create a vibrant city.



Understand

Identify

Define

Ideate

Make

Test

Evaluate

Implement



MATERIALS: Visual Persona

The MINT CONDITION is a long range proposal commitment to sustainability.
Reducing, Rethinking and Regeneration instead of recycling for a sustained viability.



THE MINT CONDITION PROJECT



MATERIALS: Deliverables, Phase One

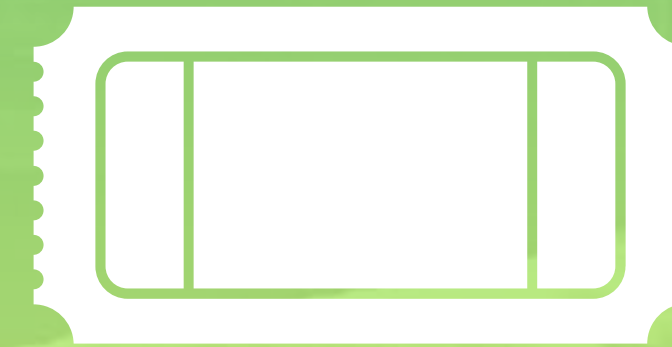
Building local awareness and education to promote a sustainable city.



Website



Social Media



Pop-Up Event

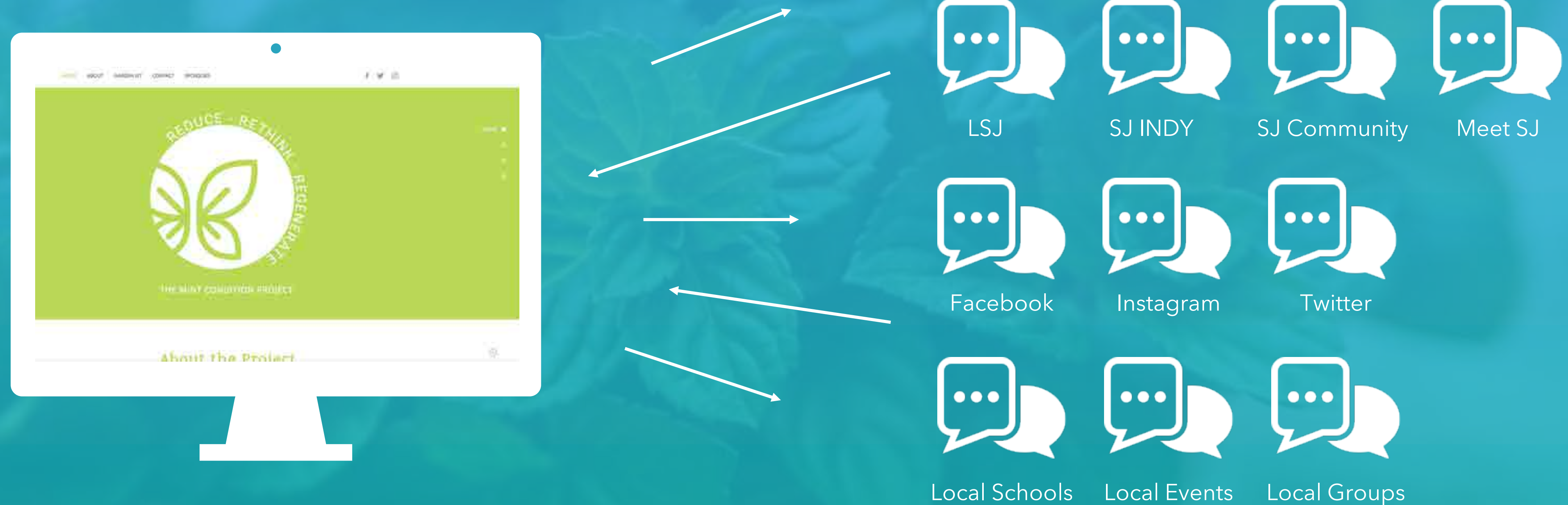


Email Campaign



MATERIALS: Grassroots Communication

Utilizing the power of digital for online engagement & budget conservation.



<https://laurielocalemedia.wixsite.com/mintcondition>



MATERIALS: Pop Up Event Engagement

Garden workshop designed to educate and engage local residents.



BRIGGS
District Library



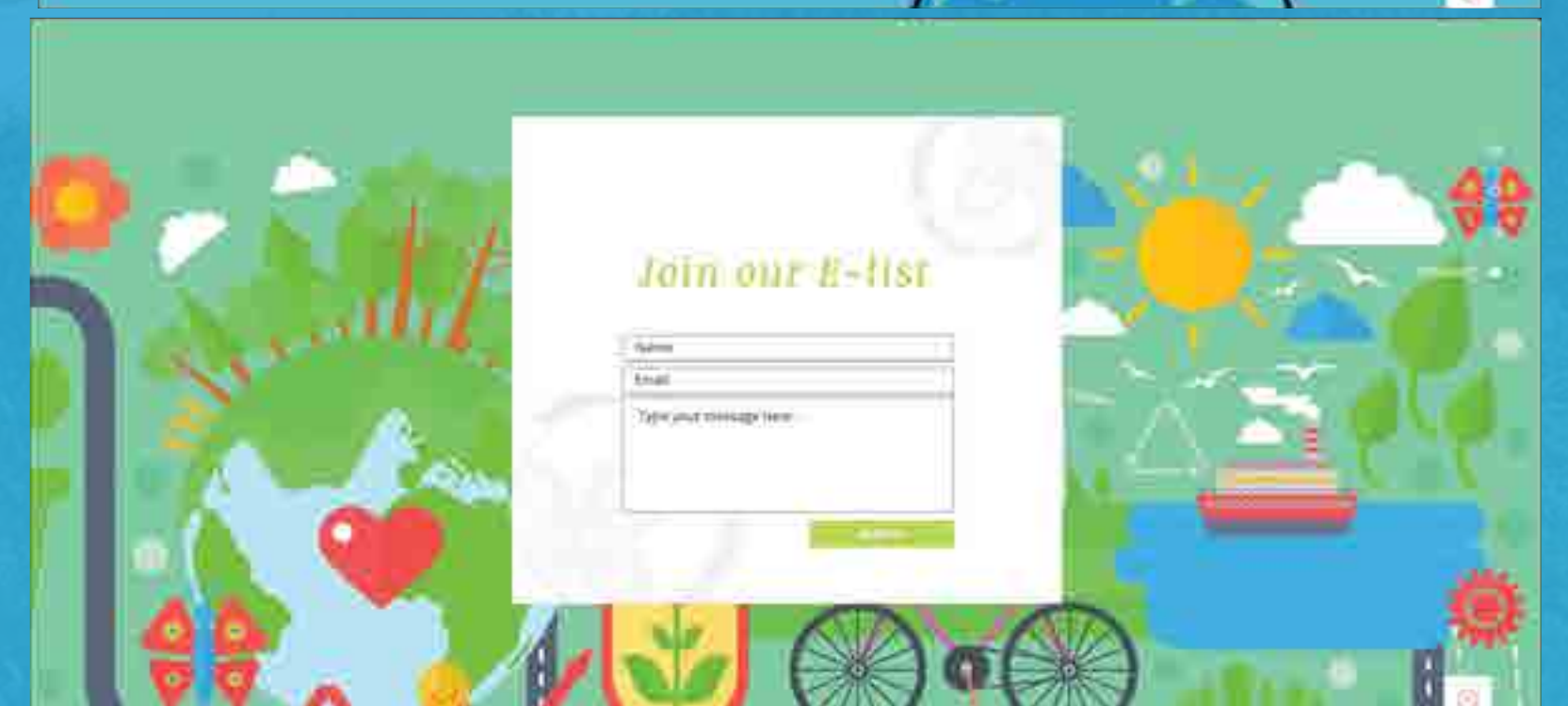
MATERIALS: Email Marketing

Allows for frequent contact

Quick access to education,
events, registrations and
new information

Easy cross promotion of
website and social media

Accessible and affordable



BARRIER ACKNOWLEDGMENT:

Overcoming challenges and seizing opportunity.

Keeping the city small

Educate on the advantages of diversity; bring affluence to community.

Resistance to change

Wind farm resistance—NIMBY effect: promoting alternative sources of energy like solar and geothermal.

Undue hardship on local organizations

Lions Club “owns” recycling center and profits from commodity. Partner with group to serve larger community interests.



ECONOMICS: Viability & Support

Funding the project



Sponsorships



Advertising



Fundraising



City Budget Allocations
& Grants

Goal: Exploding economic development benefitting entire community.



ONGOING EFFORT

Organized effort, public engagement and financial incentives



Educational Programs



Media Output



City Incentive Programs



COMMUNITY PARTNERS & RESOURCES

Thank You

Our key partners include Clinton County Commission, City of St. Johns, St. Johns Downtown Development Authority (Principle Shopping District), Clinton County Economic Alliance, Clinton County Chamber of CommerceGreenBiz.com

Additional Resources

[GreenBiz.com](https://www.greenbiz.com)

<https://www.greenbiz.com/article/how-three-cities-put-circular-economy-ideaspractice>

<https://www.greenbiz.com/article/4-techniques-catalyze-sustainable-small-townredevelopment>

Science Direct

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S106679380100152X>

Small Cities Going Green:

<http://www.greensburgks.org/sustainability>

Huffington Post

https://www.huffingtonpost.com/f-kaid-benfield/bringing-sustainabilityt_b_6519830.html

Green Living Magazine

Resource Magazine

BuzzFeed FYI

NOWITS Her

NewPlasticEconomy.org

ClintonCounty.org

MichiganGreenSchools.us

[CCEA.org](https://www.ccea.org)

Natural Capital Partners: Inspiration for the project

<https://www.naturalcapitalpartners.com>

Arcadia Power Blog

<https://blog.arcadiapower.com/10-sustainability-practices-small-businesses>

Thriving Small Business.

